

**May 24, 2010**

**Utica, NY** - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) joined Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency to discuss the positive impact more than \$7.6 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Bill) funding has had, leading to expanded programs and services and job creation.

"During National Community Action Month, I am happy to be able to highlight the specific programs and initiatives that MVCAA will be continuing or has started with more than \$7.6 million in Recovery Bill funding this year," **said Arcuri**. "MVCAA is using this additional funding to help even more families in our community to overcome the challenges of today's economy, and creating local jobs in the process."

"On behalf of the Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, the Board of Directors and staff, I would like to thank Congressman Arcuri for joining us at our Open House to share our successes and emphasize the positive impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in the Mohawk Valley," **said Amy Turner, Executive Director, Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency**.

Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency has used the Recovery Bill funding to create jobs and enhance or launch initiatives in the following areas:

- **\$4,425,165 for the Weatherization Assistance Program**, which provides families making up to 200% the federal poverty level - or about \$44,000 a year for a family of four - with energy efficiency upgrades, reducing energy consumption and saving families approximately \$358 a year in energy costs.

With this funding, MVCAA was able to weatherize 425 additional homes and hire 13 additional weatherization crew members.

- **\$1,604,000 for the Homelessness prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program**, which helps families pay security deposits, utility bills, moving bills and rent checks to either avoid

eviction or move from transitional housing into their own apartments.

- **\$626,000 in Head Start and Early Head Start Expansion, Cost of Living Adjustments and Quality Improvements,** which provide comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families.

With this funding, MVCAA was able to open a new Head Start classroom in Ilion, NY, offering Head Start opportunities to 18 children who were on their waiting list and create 4 new jobs.

- **\$989,451 in Community Service Block Grant funding,** which is designed to assist low-income people in attaining the skills, knowledge, and motivation necessary to achieve self-sufficiency.

With this funding, MVCAA awarded 20 local high school students \$1,000 scholarships, maintained 24 staff positions, and expanded adult training programs in "Green" Jobs, Child Development and in their Reprographic Center.

As part of National Community Action Month in May, Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency also hosted an agency-wide open house in which visitors were able to tour the Community Action building, including the recently expanded Head Start classrooms and public meeting rooms, and see demonstrations of energy efficiency services performed by MVCAA by weatherization specialists. Numerous other displays were set up to highlight the work that the agency does each year with thousands of families across Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency is a Community Action Agency that has been actively fighting the "War on Poverty" since 1966 in the Mohawk Valley. The Agency focuses its attention on specific problems affecting the community, mobilizes resources, and creates solutions to unlock opportunities for low-income individuals and disenfranchised families. MVCAA helps alleviate poverty and fosters self-sufficiency through comprehensive and holistic client-centered services.

Annually, MVCAA provides more than 40 programs and services to more than 10,000 residents in Herkimer and Oneida Counties. The agency successfully manages a \$15 million budget and employs a workforce of more than 300 people.

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